NORTH Bi NORTHWEST

Newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay community Social Services

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# M Ellen

**By Regan Merritt Perry**

Toss out the sieve. Dig in deep. Get the grit under your nails. Pull the gems out of the muck. They are there; obscured by heterosexist-blinds. Those filmy, little memories are profound if brief, defining even though they were let to slip aside...so many isolated "kerplops"! in a still pond of consciousness. These are the ones that made only small circles. Their quiet, dissipating rings never intersected the larger, louder salvos: boyfriends, jobs, moving,

But she did invite me over and make me dinner. She showed me the jackets she created from irresistible scraps of material. Her paintings were on the wall.

Her voice was something between the clear tone of a bell and the coo of a dove. Her laughter really tinkled as a brook falling over cold stones. Or, perhaps I sensed her personal prism tossing out shards of emotion and innuendo. It was a soft storm all about her slight figure. The portrait she took of me in college was precious then and is still displayed in my house.

That I was living with my boyfriend had nothing to do with anything. We had been housemates in college. This was a date to see her new digs and maybe hash over old times. I was surprised by the privacy of her apartment, and quite alarmed by the grip of her eyes in passing moments. I towered over her, yet she was captivating in the truest sense.

I am sure I didn't get it. Not even when we embraced quietly, slowly in the dark. Even when we became horizontal. The fluttery slow brush of her fingers had me suspended in time. It was baffling yet delightful. I was flattered and curious and willing to let the moment override whatever would keep someone out of my underwear.

I took home a careful lesson in soft and flirty touching. It is a memento I have added to my sensual vocabulary. You see, I had no register for this encounter. It was low-key, erotic attention with no particular crescendo. It remained off the books. It fell right off the edge of memory.

I wonder now if I caused frustration for her. We never did discuss it. Or maybe she was equally ambiguous in this sector of her life. In later visits she wowed me with stories of the many men who pursued her and her devious plans. I was amazed to know someone who developed and executed a romantic strategy.

The fleeting intimacy of 15 years past is now marooned. I got no hand illustrated forwarding address cards this time. I know she never approved of marriage and children. Motherhood has been a new world for me and a wall between us. I fear she has gone with no trace except that silent, beautiful encounter dusted off and examined as I conduct my personal archeology.

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*North Bi Northwest* is the quarterly newsletter f the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network. It is produced by women and is feminist in content. We feature news and events pertinent to the bisexual community, as well as creative writing and artwork.

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We welcome submissions from women and men that concern feminism, politics, sexuality, or anything of interest to bisexual women. Help define our culture! Share your histories, anger, pleasure, energy. Send us your essays, poetry, photographs, drawings, book reviews, short stories, interviews, media reports, rants, cartoons, erotica, journals, theory, conversations and letters. You're important to us and what you have to say is important to everyone.

We accept submissions on disk with hard copy (PC), typed, legibly handwritten copy or e-mail (sbwn@hotmail.com). If you send us something and we publish it, you get a free issue. Let us know what pseudonym you use, if you do not want to publish under your everyday name.

Views expressed in *North Bi Northwest* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of SBWN. Inclusion in this publication does not indicate the author's sexual orientation.

**Deadline for submissions to the new issue: January 15, 2000.**

## SBWN Statement of Purpose

We are a group of self-identified women from diverse backgrounds working to create a feminist bisexual support network. We promote, in both the heterosexual world, and in the lesbian/gay community, the understanding and acceptance of bisexuality as one of many valid sexual identities.

We regard ourselves as part of the community united against heterosexism and homophobia. We are dedicated to the right of all people to define their own sexuality, free from any social, political, or economic coercion. The discriminations we face based on our gender and our sexuality are not the only forms of oppression. We recognize that oppression is non-hierarchical and that none of us is free until all of us are free. We have invested ourselves in the feminist struggle to transform our culture into one free of all forms of bigotry, hatred, and exploitation.

We seek to provide a safe place for women to explore all aspects of their sexual orientation and identity. All women are welcome to attend SBWN activities. We are exclusively a women's group in order to create a safe space for women's expression and leadership. We come together to affirm ourselves and our choices.

## North Bi Northwest

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Leilani, Sheri, Kathie, and Dedicated Volunteers

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Susan Ruby

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**Greenwood Station**
**Seattle WA 98103-0645**

SBWN can always use volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Give us a call or talk to a facilitator at a meeting.

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*North Bi Northwest* is a publication of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of:

**Gay Community Social Services**
**P O Box 2228**
**Seattle WA 98122-0228**

# *From the Editor...*

The big news is that we decided to accept the offer from the LRC (Lesbian Resource Center) to hold our Sunday night support group meeting at their facility. Starting with the November 7, 1999 meeting we will be located at the LRC. Our telephone message number will remain the same.

We know that some women will mourn the loss of the old familiar location but we have high hopes that the group will continue to thrive. We will be more visible within the community and hopefully more connected.

On a personal note, it's been a very stressful time for me. I find that I am relying on the support of the meetings very much. I have to push myself out of the house but once I get to the meeting I feel much better. I have asked for help and received it from the group and am very grateful.

We had a wonderful party back in September where we showed off our sex toys and modeled our sexy clothing. We say filmy gowns, black stockings, leather everything, body hugging outfits, dildoes of many shapes, sizes and colours, whips, blindfolds, cuffs, vibrators. Anything and everything that each of us found to be sexy. A good time was had by all. This event was so popular that we will be repeating it in the next few months. Watch our website for the next date.

A friend sent me some email a few months ago that I wanted to share. I tried to get permission to reprint the article (or a least part of it) but I was unsuccessful. "Abortion Lessening Crime Rates" by Karen Brandon appeared on the front page of the Chicago Tribune on August 8, 1999. It is about how some research by a University of Chicago economist, Steven Levitt, and a Stanford University Law School professor, seems to show a correlation between the legalization of abortion in the 1970's and the decline of crime rates in the 1990's. The general theory seems to be that allowing women to have abortions on demand reduced the potential population of criminals by reducing the number of unwanted children. Let me see, letting women control when they bear and raise children might actually have an effect on the kind of adults their children grow into?

I will leave you to contemplate that.

Cyprienne

## MEMORIES

Do you have any funny, sad, angry, interesting anecdotes about meetings at the old location? Lovers you met there, friends you made, women who touched your lives in a memorable way? Eye opening discussions that may have affected your life in some small or large way? Great times at the Honey Bear after the meetings? Write something down and send it to us by mail or email for the next issue of North Bi Northwest.

## WWC

***The Women's Welcoming Committee***

**A safe place for women to learn about BDSM**

The WWC meets on the first Tuesday of every month from 7–9 p.m. at Beyond the Edge Café, 703 East Pike, on Capitol Hill in Seattle.

Meetings are:

- A chance to ask questions
- A place to learn about events
- Open to all women
- Casual
- Free

For more information, including some links to useful resources and instructions for subscribing to the WWC mailing list, vist our web page:

www.bent.org/wwc

Woman Suffrage Time Line

1776 Abigail Adams writes to her husband, John Adams, asking him to "remember the ladies" in the new code of laws. Adams replies the men will "fight the despotism of the petticoat."

1777 Women lose the right to vote in New York.

1780 Women lose the right to vote in Massachusetts.

1784 Women lose the right to vote in New Hampshire.

1787 US Constitutional Convention places voting qualifications in the hands of the states. Women in all states except New Jersey lose the right to vote.

1792 Mary Wollstonecraft publishes Vindication of the Rights of Women in England.

1807 Women lose the right to vote in New Jersey, the last state to revoke the right.

Women Join the Abolitionist Movement

1830s Formation of the female anti-slavery associations

1836 Angelina Grimke appeals to Southern women to speak out against slavery.

1837 The Pastoral Letter of the General Association of Massachusetts to the Congregational Churches Under Their Care is promulgated against women speaking in public against slavery, it is mainly directed against the Grimke sisters.

1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London. Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and other women barred from participating on account of their sex.

Women Begin to Organize For Their Own Rights

1848 First Womens Rights convention in Seneca Fall, New York. Equal suffrage proposed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton After lengthy debate of so radical a notion, it is adopted.

1850 Womens rights convention held in April in Salem, Ohio. First national womens rights convention held in October in Worcester, Massachusetts.

1850-1861 Annual Womens Rights conventions held. The last, in 1861, in Albany, New York lobbies for a liberalized divorce bill. Horace Greely opposes the bill, which loses.

1861-1865 Civil War. Over the objections of Susan B. Anthony, women put aside suffrage activities to help the war effort.

1867 Fourteenth amendment passes Congress, defining citizens as male; this is the first use of the word male in the Constitution. Kansas campaign for black and woman suffrage: both lose. Susan B. Anthony forms Equal Rights Association, working for universal suffrage.

Suffrage Movement Divides Over Black v. Woman Suffrage

1868 Fourteenth amendment ratified. Fifteenth amendment passes Congress, giving the vote to black men. Women petition to be included but are turned down. Formation of New England Woman Suffrage Association. In New Jersey, 172 women attempt to vote; their ballots are ignored.

1869 Frederick Douglass and others back down from woman suffrage to concentrate on fight for black male suffrage. National Woman Suffrage Association formed in May with Elizabeth Cady Stanton as president. American Woman Suffrage Association formed in November with Henry Ward Beecher as president. In England, John Stuart Mill, economist and husband of suffragist Harriet Taylor, publishes On the Subjugation of Women. Wyoming territory grants first woman suffrage since 1807.

Civil Disobedience Is Tried

1870 Fifteenth Amendment ratified. The Grimke sisters, now quite aged, and 42 other women attempt to vote in Massachusetts, their ballots are cast but ignored. Utah territory grants woman suffrage.

1871 The Anti-Suffrage Society is formed.

1872 Susan B. Anthony and supporters arrested for voting. Anthonys sisters and 11 other women held for $500 bail. Anthony herself is held for $1000 bail.

1873 Denied a trial by jury, Anthony loses her case in June and is fined $100 plus costs. Suffrage demonstration at the Centennial of the Boston Tea Party.

1874 Protest at a commemoration of the Battle of Lexington. In Myner v. Happerstett the US Supreme Court decides that being a citizen does not guarantee suffrage. Womens Christian Temperance Union formed.

1876 On July 4, in Philadelphia, Susan B. Anthony reads The Declaration for the Rights of Women from a podium in front of the Liberty Bell. The crowd cheers. Later, the suffragists meet in the historic First Unitarian Church.

1878 Woman suffrage amendment first introduced in US Congress.

1880 Lucretia Mott, suffrage leader born in 1793, dies.

1882 The House and Senate appoint committees on woman suffrage, both report favorably.

1884 Belva Lockwood runs for president. The US House of Representatives debates woman suffrage.

1886 Women protest being excluded from the dedication ceremonies for the Statue of Liberty. Suffrage amendment reaches the US Senate floor, it is defeated two to one.

1887 Utah women lose right to vote.

1890 The NWSA and the AWSA merge to form NAWSA. The focus turns to working at the state level. Campaign loses in South Dakota.

1893 Matilda Joslyn Gage publishes Woman, Church and State. After a vigorous campaign led by Carrie Chapman Catt, Colorado men vote for woman suffrage.

1894 Despite 600,000 signatures, a petition for woman suffrage is ignored in New York. Lucy Stone, born in 1818, dies.

1895 Elizabeth Cady Stanton publishes The Woman's Bible. Utah women regain suffrage.

1896 Idaho grants woman suffrage.

Suffrage Activism Enters the 20th Century

1900 Carrie Chapman Catt takes over the reins of the NASWA.

1902 Elizabeth Cady Stanton, born in 1815, dies.

1906 Susan Brownell Anthony, born in 1820, dies.

1907 Harriot Stanton Blatch, Elizabeths daughter, forms the Equality League of Self Supporting Women which becomes the Womens Political Union in 1910. She introduces the English suffragists tactics of parades, street speakers, and pickets.

1910 Washington (state) grants woman suffrage.

1911 California grants woman suffrage. In New York City, 3,000 march for suffrage.

1912 Teddy Roosevelt's Progressive Party includes woman suffrage in their platform. Oregon, Arizona, and Kansas grant woman suffrage.

1913 Womens Suffrage parade on the eve of Wilsons inauguration is attacked by a mob. Hundreds of women are injured, no arrests are made. Alaskan Territory grants suffrage. Illinois grants municipal and presidential but not state suffrage to women.

1916 Alice Paul and others break away from the NASWA and form the National Womens Party.

1917 Beginning in January, NWP posts silent Sentinels of Liberty at the White House. In June, the arrests begin. Nearly 500 women are arrested, 168 women serve jail time, some are brutalized by their jailers. North Dakota, Indiana, Nebraska, and Michigan grant presidential suffrage; Arkansas grants primary suffrage. New York, South Dakota, and Oklahoma state constitutions grant suffrage.

1918 The jailed suffragists released from prison. Appellate court rules all the arrests were illegal. President Wilson declares support for suffrage. Suffrage Amendment passes US House with exactly a two-thirds vote but loses by two votes in the Senate.

1919 In January, the NWP lights and guards a Watchfire for Freedom. It is maintained until the Suffrage Amendment passes US Senate on June 4. The battle for ratification by at least 36 states begins.

1920 The Nineteenth Amendment, called the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, is ratified by Tennessee on August 18. It becomes law on August 26.

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Some of the documents noted in the timeline are included in the following websites: www.undelete.com and http://www.gate.net/~liz/suffrage.htm//.

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Or call Liane at 604-525-9454
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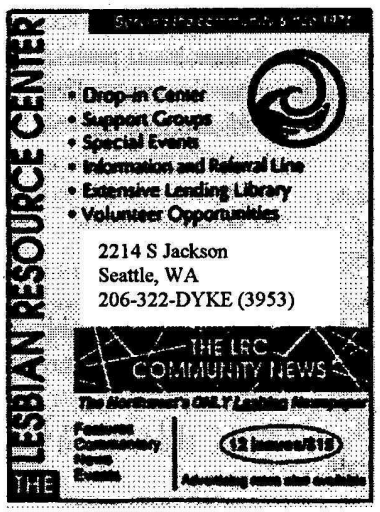


## Watching while you sleep

I gaze at the speckles strewn about your body, longing for a pen, yearning for one, not wanting to disturb your soft, sweet slumber. A fountain pen with peacock blue immutable ink to play dot-to-dot, searching, scanning for a map or chart...

Would it lead me to something...a question? Would the map I conceived guide me to the borough of your soul, to a profound state of mind, to world in your eyes, or the galaxy of your most sacred of place?

Ms. Jet Tenley

# The Boy with the Blue Hair

**By Toria Dahl**

I don't know his real name.

He, like many of the kids at the queer youth center where I volunteer, gave me his street name when we met earlier in the evening. When I arrived, one of the volunteers who was just wrapping up her shift told me she'd had to warn him several times about aggressive language already, and that he appeared to be stirring up trouble. That's our interpersonal code for keep an eye on this kid. Nothing unusual in that.

Later, the problem kid and I were sitting in the kitchen and he mentioned casually that there was a man living nearby who had "molested a bunch of kids." I looked down the length of the table to where he sat. Greasy blue hair, dyed with something cheap that had left a faint blue stain across his forehead, rumpled clothes, so far a typical rebel teen, going against society's expectations. But beyond that, he wasn't holding my gaze, his shoulders slumped, his fingers fidgeted at the edge of the table, picking at non-existent crumbs. I asked him how he knew about this guy.

"He gives us street kids a lot of money for doing stuff. Chores around his house, y'know?"

I nodded. And waited. This listening has become my personal specialty at the center. In the silence he looked over at me through shaggy bangs. "That guy should be stopped." I agreed, but he got up and left the table, heading out toward the front room to play pool and listen to rap music that all sounds the same to me. You can't push street kids for information. They say only what they want to say, on their own schedules, and in their own way.

Less than half an hour later, he plopped into a chair near where I was hanging out and chatting casually with a couple of the other youth. In a moment when everyone had broken into smaller conversations as groups of people tend to do, he said "We reported him to CPS. I hope they lock him up for life."

I moved into a chair closer to him and said, "Who reported him?"

In the next half hour, I learned that this 16-year-old boy was raped last night by a man who deliberately preys on homeless kids, offering them shelter and money for minor chores. He then habitually molests them while they're trying to sleep under the nebulous safety of his roof. The boy with the blue hair woke up this morning, after being plied liberally with alcohol the night before, without his clothes on and distinct memories of being held down and not being able to move. The more he talked, the clearer it became that his memory was not anywhere near as clouded as the molestor had hoped it would be under the influence of too much cheap beer.

I called in Dan, an outreach worker, and the three of us discussed a victim's options, in particular the idea of pressing charges with the police. The boy has decided that he wants to sleep on it at a friend's house tonight and then go to the police tomorrow when he's not feeling so much stress. Dan and I agreed that this was understandable and made sure he knew what resources would be available to him if he needed help.

After Dan left, the boy and I played a round or two of pool, talking about other things, anything but the horror of the night before. He talked about his dad who taught him how to play "slop" and who no longer speaks to him, who kicked him out of the house because he's gay. And when we were closing up for the night, this boy, whose real name I do not know, asked if I would be back tomorrow night.

"No, but I'll be back next Tuesday."

He nodded, "Cool. I'll come back next Tuesday."

I smiled, "Great. I'll look forward to seeing you." And I meant it. His friend, the one who's giving him shelter tonight, showed up and they left just before closing.

Sitting here in my warm apartment, a cat purring in deep contentment by my side, I wonder where the kid with the blue hair is. Does he feel safe? Does he know that being gay is not ever a good reason for throwing someone out to fend for himself on the street? Does he know that there are plenty of gay men around the world who don't prey on children? That this rapist he met is not the norm? Will he survive long enough to find out?

One of these days, I may learn his real name. But for now, I'll be happy if he just shows up again next week.

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# Chaps

**by Diana**

"What are you doing? Oh, that seems dull". (husky commanding voice) "Get in the chaps and meet me at Dante's" (click). I could feel a sexual tingle shoot through my body.

She struts in with slick wet hair, leather jacket, white v-neck T-shirt, and chaps . I smile my all teeth sex smile. I blush. She sits next to me. I buy her a beer and nod toward the foosball table. I'm not startled by her self-confidence layered in leather. I'm hot over it.

The game begins but I see no table, men, or the ball. I see the foosball handle three inches from her sex. My breathing deepens and I feel the moisture condense between my legs. The way she shifts her weight causes a groan of leather, creating a hood where thigh and hip, encased in black leather meet blue jeans. A dark place is illuminated by my glare.

She mockingly adds one to her score. I don't notice. I'm transfixed by the way her T-shirt hugs her breast. I can see the outline of her restraints which reads like a map to the other breast. I smile flirting approval for the score.

The next ball is loose mirroring the chaos in my mind but all I can see is the handle she bumped with her hip. I get a peek of her cleavage when she leans down. The popcorn trail of leather braids along the seams of her chaps lead my eyes down her long legs ending at my clit. The boots peek out of the bottom and I wonder if she would put the tips along the seam of my pants and press my burning flesh. My blood throbs where my thighs converge on my sex. The pressure makes my insides contract. I reach into my deep pockets and tug on my jeans. The slight rub makes me crazy. Suddenly my brain issues the command, "Take her to the bathroom and fuck her in the last stall".

The next point has come and gone. I'm thinking of a bet on the game that gets me into her chaps, something along the lines of, "My place or yours for the next point?" but it's like paste on my tongue. I hear the next ball drop and I know she wonders if I'm paying attention. Again my brain screams, but this time a plea, "Take me now. In the car, around the corner, 5 minutes."

Game is over. I lost badly. We move over to airhockey. She smiles and asks for a bet. I melt and raise an eyebrow. "Sex?" I yell. Damn I didn't just say "ahahahahah?!?!" I'm thinking SEX and I laughed? I could beat myself. She has to prompt me out of my dreamy state. I serve in slow motion. I see her blue jeans surrounded by leather. Oh my God she's doing a victory dance on the first score. Her hips flow in a circular motion. The burn deepens. My mind whispers, "Loose all 7 points to see that victory dance a few more times."

I nod toward the door. It's raining so we slip under the garage canopy. I grab her leather coat by the collar and back her to the wall. My heat swells as I force myself upon her. I grind my hip into the fold of her jeans. I reach down and pull on the back of the chaps where her ass is exposed.

We walk in the door and explode in the hallway., Clothing comes off. Heavy kissing. Telepathy to move the cat is invoked. Jewelry is removed. Lips are locked. Her bare chest pressed against my naked body. I begin a slow methodical rub of my juices against the leather. I feel my lips entice her into me. I close my eyes and grind letting my breasts hang in her face. She fondles and licks gratefully. I'm about to explode as I bear down on her thigh. I moan, throw back my head, and open my sex as my body erupts in an orgasm.

I'm confused for a moment as I realize the hot babe from the bar is half naked on my couch and I've just cum so hard I can't think. She flips me on my back, slips out of her chaps then lays down upon me. I can feel her excitement roll down my leg. I reach down and touch eliciting a groan. Frantic movements quickly follow as she arches her back and I watch shivers race down her body. She collapses on top of me and neither one of us can think. Pictures race through my head and take me back to the bar, the chaps, the garage, the hall, and the couch. All proof that I wasn't dreaming.

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# Desire

A few weeks ago we had a writing workshop. The topic was "desire". The following are the results.

*The first thing that comes to your mind about desire:*

Desire is risky for me, especially when other people find out what I desire. That makes me vulnerable, helpless, controllable. I tend to not share my most important desires for this reason.

---

Longing for passion, for the emotion that keeps us alive. The burning inside and around the center or the bottom of my being. Without desire there is no life. No fantasy, dream or deep emotion. It's the carnal craving that is the animal in us. That want to devour, taste and smell the most primal.

---

Desire to me brings to mind the whole idea of passion. Regarding a person, food, clothes, job, chocolate. Oh, but I digress. This word desire particularly makes me think of a person who I might desire, whether it be someone I see walking down the street or someone I am deeply in love with. Could be male or female.

---

the longing of a taste, just beyond perception
the foretaste of the divine
a need not yet fulfilled
the breathless awaiting desire
furtive then bold
emerging tentatively
like a moth
then beating against the flame
always seeking
desire

Caroline felt very confused as she thought about Dawn who she had just met because she was beginning to have sexual thoughts about her. What was the matter with her, she wondered. She was involved with a very sexy but heterosexual man and had a committed relationship with him. And yet she wondered what it would be like to kiss Dawn passionately, stroke her breasts, caress her vagina and taste her sexy love juices and have this woman want her the way Ricky did.

How would Ricky react if she told him about her desires? She had been sexual with her roommate in college who had been a woman but that was a long time ago. Caroline remembered waiting for her roommate after her lover's dates with men and spanking her for being such a slut and sleeping with men before marriage. She was wet thinking about her college roommate.

---

First things I think of when I think of desire is sexual desire. Fantasies. Lustful wishes and so on.I also think of desire as a passionate term used like my desire for you overwhelms me or my sexual desires drive me to madness.

*Something you desire right now:*

Peace and quietness, at least for a little while. Predictability. Calm and ordered resolution to some of my current problems. A successful outcome of this evening's workshop.

Desire makes life more real, but it can also drive one to madness. He walks by and I hope to smell him. I can imagine what he tastes like, the thickness of his tongue or the strength of his cock. I can feel his skin next to mine, the scruffiness of his beard, and the softness of his face. His blue eyes would pierce my soul and look into the depth of my being. His cock would pierce my body as my whole being explodes. Desire makes this so real, just as he walks by.

---

I desire a relationship. A woman. A special friend, companion, lover, partner. Walking, talking, being, love. Warm. Safe. Exploring loving together. I long to find that special someone, but realize she is not going to just show up on my doorstep one day. I have to go out looking for her. Searching, risking meeting new women, some of whom may not accept me as I am. But if I hope to have my desire fulfilled, I must go forth. With confidence and an open heart.

---

A close girlfriend who I am physically involved with on some level. To be an excellent healer and practitioner for myself and others. Using various techniques and resources. Peace within myself regarding my household and roommate. More vacations to warm climates and long, meandering beaches. A friend who would like to travel with me. More cashflow to catch up on bills and so I can spoil myself more often. To have a beautiful woman say "yes" when I ask her to dance.

---

A moment of desire

I want now...
I want this now...
I want that now...
I want you now...
Selfish vulnerability
A mosaic of confusing choices
Can anyone express just one desire?
Is that too much risk?
Wanting isn't polite
Wanting is dangerous
Dare one utter a wish?
Is it only a bubble waiting
to shimmer into nothingness?
What do I desire?
Shhh...I hardly dare to speak

---

I desire more than anything else to get my kids back home after we win our case in court. My heart aches with desire to be thought of as a "good mother" and to be recognized as a competent person. Everything else seems hollow when compared to the maternal desire for my children. I desire more than anything else to be forgiven for my mistakes of being weak with my children. My desire for their continuous love got me into this trouble and I need to control those feelings and be willing to suppress the desire to always be approved of.

I also desire balance in my life. I need to balance being a "good mother" and a sexual person. I need to show that I can be a good Christian mother and also a writer who includes sex scenes in her novels. I want to be bisexual and not in the closet and I desire to be in my personal integrity, but how can I be with the shadow of the Child Welfare System always watching over me?

*How do you know you're desired?*

The look in another's eyes, the irregular breathing, the moving closer to stand or sit where it is easy to reach out and touch. The long, lingering glances. Being told in explicit detail-you are beautiful, sexy, loved, move with grace, are the best, share openly, give of yourself. I want to be with you, spend time in your presence, sleep with you, eat with you, listen to your heart and soul. You make me happy, fill me with joy.

---

I have been desired. To be undesired is not my fear, but to desire and to never be desired in return, that is empty. To desire is a wonderful and being desired is not necessary for desire to be fulfilling. In my marriage, I was desired. In other relationships, I have been desired. Once I craved for someone who desired me, but when I made my feelings known they no longer felt the same. My ultimate fear is to be greatly desired by many and never find someone I desire as strongly.

---

Wow. So many ways. Touch. Taste. Feel. Presents. Chocolate. A warm smile, a gentle caress. A panting "I want you" in my ear. A hug, a wink, a call at midday, just to say you care. You're thinking of me. How do I know I am desired? I have only to look into your eyes.

---

He tells me by always touching me when he sees me.

With a new person, a stranger:

- Lots of smiles
- Wants to stand closer than my other friends
- Whispers in my ear
- Finds something to always keep the conversation flowing
- Flirts with me
- Somehow gives just a hint that he/she wishes to see me again, even if it's just the next dance
- I have his/her phone number in my pocket

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Eye contact,
An interest in who I am,
A smile, a touch
Or the bulge in his pants
Or the wetness in hers

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Must it be said?
Must it be explicitly stated?
Must it be my way?
Do I remember you desire me when you make the bed?
When you clean up the house before I get home?
When you fix that broken shelf?
I know you desire me when your hand strays to my breast,
Your eyes linger as I walk away,
Your breath quickens.
I shall strive to see the desire in your glance,
In your efforts to notice.
In all of the varied expressions of your love.
You love me-desire has no greater voice.

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I longed for passion when I was younger and before I met my husband. I felt great losing my virginity to him and we used to have great sex. Sometimes we still do. Yet sometimes I think that the stress has robbed our passion away. Fatigue has also robbed our desire and I feel so old and sad sometimes. Lack of self esteem and guilt rob away my passion for him but not as often his passion for me. Is this really desire he feels or just desire for a quick release from his body? Do we really desire sex or do we do it because it is expected of us as married people? I cringe when I hear him mention other women's names as being sexy and yet I know he will not cheat on me and have sex with a woman without my permission. I too desire to find a woman lover someday, but at times that seems impossible because of all the things going on in my life.

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He sits in his chair. The look in his eye meets with the slight smile on his face, followed by the brush of his hand across my face. He leans forward grabbing my hips and pulling me towards him almost tumbling on top of him. He kisses the crook of my neck, breathing softly in my ear, his deep purring in my ear gives me chills. "Into the bedroom," he says. He gently pushes me onto the bed, grabs my hip and shoulder, turning me onto my stomach. He quickly and smoothly grabs my hips, pulling me off the bed 'til I'm kneeling bent over the bed, pulls my dress up over my hips and his deep rough sounding moan, followed by a sigh of delight, makes me wag my ass at him. "Oh how I've missed you," he says, almost purring. I hear the sound of his zipper and the ripping of a condom wrapper.

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*Alternate Topic: About this space we are leaving*

Memories of this space, my first meeting. So new and nervous, afraid to attend social events, to then growing so much to be so bold sexually and brave to cruise/pounce on women (consentually of course) from meetings. How SBWN was part of my journey toward self exploring my bisexuality. Making friends who have become some of the most important people in my life. Sharing my day to day stuff, my dreams, my loves, my tears, and my joy.

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Subject: Letter to the Editor
Date: Thu, 9 Sep 1999 11:10:12 -0700

Dear Editor,

Thanks to Toria for the wonderful article in the August-September issue titled "Debunking the Myth of Bisexuality." I appreciated Toria's patience dealing with the lesbian who insisted on defining her sexual orientation and telling her it was compulsive.

I faced that attitude many times, both from lesbians and from the straight world (gay men didn't seem to worry about it all that much). I believe that some people feel so insecure about their own orientation/gender identity, that they insist on imposing their world view on others whom they find challenging. After all, if they allowed the challenger any valid space, they would have to redefine their own. That is obviously too uncomfortable for them.

I believe that demanding complete ownership and control of one's own identity is essential to maintaining healthy boundaries and wholesome self esteem. That means everything from spelling my name correctly to respecting my gender and my orientation. Thank you, Toria, for stating your case clearly and not allowing yourself to be drawn into the other person's myopia. Your stand is a stand for all of us.

Janice Van Cleve

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# Comments from women attending support group meetings

## Open Rap 18 July 1999

Suggest adding to facilitator spiel: Please be respectful and be aware of how much you are talking. We meet to give everyone a chance to speak especially when we have a large group.

Thank you Kelly! You did a great job. I appreciate your role today.

I was impressed tonight with the accepting, frank, open discussion of things we struggle with.

I really appreciated an opportunity to discuss some problems with being a facilitator. I like making Sheri blush.

I enjoyed the openness of the group and felt very comfortable. Thank you! I'm sure I'll be back.

Confrontations are good!

This meeting went well, it was relaxing and fun.

### Dating and Dumping 31 July 1999

We all need a contract/statement before the first date to clarify intent, assumptions, etc.

Contracts are great as long as you don't have to put in too many disclaimers, exclusions, provision and legalese...some restrictions may apply, see new girlfriend for details.

I feel scared of finding a woman who will date with me because I am married and polyamorous.

Surprisingly good meeting. Cats are good.

I'm inspired to ask some women out!

### Open Rap 15 August 1999

The group was very welcoming. I felt very comfortable.

The discussion on communication was interesting.

I am glad I came here!

The topic of relationship dynamics was fascinating. Who knew women were so complex?

It was interesting to hear ways of "letting go" or prioritize the fights you pick.

Six new women tonight! How exciting!

Coming Out 29 August 1999

Lori, very interesting topic.

Everyone has their story...(We should all give everyone a chance to talk about it.)

I am so happy I came. I feel much better.

We need a masturbation meeting!

Good to feel that I'm not alone. This group is fun, it's nice being around all the female energy.

Thanks! So good to meet you all!

Delightful meeting!

### Monosexuality 5 September 1999

Marriage gives you 1024 Rights and Responsibilities. It feels very supportive to know women in our group would refuse to participate in an institution that excludes anyone.

Good discussion tonight. Lots of new faces. Monosexuality seems to be a very fluid topic, hard to pinpoint what exactly was being talked about with such a free flowing discussion.

This was my first meeting. I got informed on things I didn't know before.

There is nothing quite as exciting as being in a room full of bright, verbal, life-loving women.

What is the relevance of a bisexual identity within a long term monogamous relationship?

Exciting meeting, it is great to hear from all these new women!

### Small Group Set-up 12 September 1999

This meeting really helped me to have support in this part of my life.

It's comforting to come to a place where I can talk about sensitive topics.

I hope we do manage to form some small groups out of this meeting. I'd really like to have a group that meets on the Eastside.

I feel supported and less isolated when I come here. I always enjoy hearing all the comments from everyone and feel very welcomed here.

Good meeting. Good idea to broaden our level of support to people in smaller groups.

### Open Rap 26 September 1999

There were some fun stories about our mechanical abilities. Is it a gene? Is it socialization? Is it simple interest?

I enjoyed the lively back and forth interaction tonight. It was nice to hear everyone's news and common experiences.

Enjoyed the lively open ended quality of our discussion tonight. The more I come to group, the more I want to keep coming back.

I enjoyed the conversation and felt very comfortable as a first time attendee. I look forward to being here in the future.

### Open Rap 3 October 1999

Great discussion. Wonderful support of each other. Thank you.

Great to finally be here! Melissa, I made it! Enlightening, intelligent and helpful discussion on "How to break up and what to expect", and other topics. Did anyone say sex?!!

Interesting trying to talk and fold and stuff and lick at the same time. Good sharing of personal stuff tonight.

Good meeting, enjoyed hearing what everyone had to say.

This was great as usual, so glad I found out about this group!

Thanks so much for the wise advice and support on "How to break up with a lover."

Great meeting. Felt like we shared at a very deep level.

Thanks for everything!

Finally! We talked about sex...then romance, being romanced...then expectations from our partners and trying to get needs met in other ways rather than try to change them.

### Memories Before The Move 24 October 1999

Great meeting! Thanks for the "mammories"! I was not bored!☺

Mellow. Good meeting. Good closure for leaving this space.

Thanks for allowing me to sit in for the night. You ladies have a very warm, inviting group. A much needed part of the LGBT community, especially for bi folks.

Loved hearing about everyone's past experiences. It's always great to be in a safe space.

Thank you for doing this, so glad there's a group for me. Neat to hear stories as my first time.

It's great to come to discover such a warm group of people. Also nice to see a bunch of ladies together making sexy comments. Will try to come back.

This is interesting to find other women like me who are in their personal integrity too.

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## BC BI CON

**By Cyprienne**

At the end of August I drove up to Vancouver with two companions to attend the 4th Annual B. C. Conference on Bisexuality, Gender and Sexual Diversity. We stayed with a friend of mine who owns a small condo apartment in the West End. This was my second year attending the conference. On Friday evening we attended the Silent Art Auction. We were late and missed the wine and cheese refreshments. We chatted with other conference attendees until the event was declared over. On Saturday we registered and received our schedules and folders. The workshop that I had chosen was full so I went to "Finding Healthcare". The scheduled facilitator was unable to attend so we had a free form discussion with a volunteer leader. I had hoped to get information on post-

menopausal remedies but I didn't learn anything new on that subject.

This year a list of local restaurants with a map was provided so finding a place to eat lunch was easy. After lunch I attended what turned out to be my favorite workshop "Biversity Sex Toys". The medium sized room was jam packed with women and men. The workshop was led by two women who operate a store selling sex toys and safe sex supplies. They gave us a short lecture on why silicone dildoes and sex toys are preferable to rubber or wood or leather. Silicone can be sterilized by boiling in water while the others cannot. Next they held up various toys and talked about how to use each one. Questions were answered and comments were listened to and we all laughed a lot.

*Melissa and Cyprienne at the Bi Con*

Next I attended "Women's Issues". I was late getting to it and missed the initial set-up and get to know each other part. We broke into small discussion groups for most of the session. The last part consisted of reports from each of the smaller groups, a sort of wrap of the topics we discussed. Relationships and dating were some of the topics.

Saturday evening we returned to watch some of the creative performances by attendees. There was poetry and singing and drag. After that came a dance with flashing lights and the usual too loud (and for me mostly unfamiliar) music. Many people dressed up for this event.

Sunday we slept late and missed most of the morning festivities. I slipped into a room where videos were being shown and caught some of "Hermaphrodites Speak" and "Remembrance". I enjoyed hearing the experiences of the hermaphrodites, good and bad. The second was about transgendered women who have been victims of violence. The acoustics in the room were not good and made it very hard to listen to the videos.

The last workshop I went to was "Bi and Over Forty", a topic dear to my heart. It was a small group and I had been in the same workshop last year with some of the same people. We talked about the difficulty finding new partners as we aged and health care issues. I was the most comfortable in this workshop because it was small and there were familiar faces and I deal with all these issues in my life.

The conference officially ended with a brief closing ceremony followed by a group photo. There was an after conference barbecue which we didn't attend because we had a long drive home ahead of us.

SBWN had a small presence in the form of brochures and newsletters in the display area courtesy of BiNetBC which gave us a section of their table. I picked up a list of bisexual reading material and one of 'known bisexuals, past and present' at the BiNet table. As usual, it was wonderful to spend a few days in the presence of a large gathering of bi and bi friendly people.

## Small Groups Forming

At a recent SBWN Sunday meeting, a group of us worked on forming small groups for the purpose of regular, consistent support around a shared issue or with people of a similar background. Not everyone who is or may be interested in being a part of a small group could be there, but we wanted to find a way to include them. So a framework was set up for several different types of groups, with a temporary coordinator/contact for each, in the hopes that other women in the community will be in touch with the contact if they would like to be in a group. If you are interested in joining one of the small groups, call and leave a message on the phone line or inquire at one of the support group meetings. These groups are not facilitated or therapist-led. The various groups and their coordinators are as follows:

1) Exploring Sexual Identity/Orientation and Coming Out Issues. Meet once/month on Saturday afternoons or Monday evenings.

2) Exploring Sexual Identity/Orienation and Coming Out Issues. Meet once or twice/month, weekday evenings (not Thursdays) or Sunday days.

3) Older Women's support group (pref. 30+). Meet once/month, flexible schedule but not Sunday evenings.

4) Sexual Abuse. Meet once or twice/month, Thurs, Fri, or Sat.

5) Writers Group. Meet twice/month, not Wednesdays.

If someone is interested in these topics but the time/day/location doesn't work, you are more than welcome to be a coordinator for a different meeting time. Same goes for those who have their own topic ideas. There were also suggestions for a Queer literature group and social groups, although no one was available to be a contact for these.

If anyone would like to be a contact/coordinator for a small group, please send a message to sbwn@hotmail.com

# Sappho

**By Laura M. Handy**

*I know one source of confusion:*
*A faint desire,*
*An ancient desire for*
*"Her who wears the scent of violets*
*On her young breasts." (1)*

*It stirs:*
*A lyric longing,*
*An ancient understanding*
*Between soft thighs.*
*Such crystal image clarity!*
*So Sappho speaks.*
*So she softens my confusion.*

(1) Sappho, translated by Willis Barnstone

# Calendar

For locations, confirmations, or more information , call the appropriate message machine and someone will get back to you (with discretion if requested). For SBWN events call (206) 517-7767. For SBMU call (206) 322-8015. For all other Seattle events, (BiNet, Polifidelity). Call (206) 728-4533. All SBWN support group meetings are held at the LRC.

**Sun Nov 7** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm Power & Communications in Relationships

**Sat Nov 13** Polyfidelity Potluck 6:30 pm, Pilgrim Congregational Church (Location may change, call or check their website)

**Sun Nov 14** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Open Rap

**Sun Nov 21** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Lions and Tigers and Lesbians, Oh My!

**Sun Nov 28** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Open Rap

**Sun Dec 5** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Communication Skills in Relationships

**Sun Dec 12** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Business meeting

**Sun Dec 19** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Open Rap

**Sun Dec 26** No meeting

**Sun Jan 2** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Open Rap

**Sat Jan 8** Polyfidelity Potluck 6:30 pm, Pilgrim Congregational Church (Location may change, call or check their website)

**Sun Jan 9** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, How To Keep the Home Fires Burning

**Sun Jan 16** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Open Rap

**Sun Jan 23** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Flirting – Lessoning the Freak Out Factor

**Sun Jan 30** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Open Rap

**Sun Feb 6** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Jealousy

**Sun Feb 13** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Business meeting

**Sun Feb 20** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Open Rap

**Sun Feb 27** SBWN meeting, 6:30 pm, Art: A Workshop

# Local Groups

**Seattle Bisexual Women's Network**—Support and discussion groups on Sundays at 6:30 pm. For more information, call our message machine. (206)-517-7767

Our website can now be reached at:
http://www.geocities.com/sbwn/

Our email address is: sbwn@hotmail.com

When attending support group meetings, please refrain from wearing perfumes or other scented products for the comfort of all.

**SBMU** (Seattle Bisexual Men's Union)—a men's anti-sexist support and social group with discussion meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month at Prospect Church, 1919 E. Prospect Street, and monthly social events (location varies). (206)-322-8015

**Polyfidelity Discussion Group**—Support group and communtiy for people in or interested in multipartner relationships. Discussions and literature on responsible non-monogamy, intimate networks, alternative relationships and community. Bi-monthly potluck discussions, 6:30 pm at the Pilgrim Congregational church, 509 10th Ave E, Seattle. For more information call: (206)-728-4533.
Http://www.scn.org/~spg/index.html

Asian Lesbian Bisexual Alliance
P.O. Box 14232, Seattle, WA 98114
http://www.alba.org/alba.asp
Anne Xuan Clark albarocks@msn.com

**Yin.com** is a website listing Seattle Women's Events.
http://www.yin.com